The San Diego Union

TUESDAY MORNING, FEB. 4, 1969

MILITARY PAY TEST ADVISED FIRST

Plan To End Draft Is Premature

THURSDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 30, 1969

WISDOM SHOULD GUIDE BUDGET CUTS

Quality in Defense Must Prevail

BILL OF RIGHTS 168 YEARS OLD

Citizens' Freedom Guaranteed

SATURDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 25, 1969

SOUTHEAST ASIA VULNERABLE

Disengagement Invites Reds

Union's editorial page and director Krulak (1967): Flag-waving in defense of Defense

Herb Klein's Old Paper

San Diego is a Navy town, and a fiercely conservative one. Not surprisingly, its sole morning newspaper, the Union, puts flag ceremonies on page one and all but kept Robert Kennedy's picture off it until his death. The Union is the bright light of the 26-paper Copley chain, whose top echelon consists mostly of ex-Navy brass with muscular nicknames, from owner James S. (Super-Jim) Copley down. For the last year, the Union has had a special significance: even though the paper itself finds Richard Nixon a bit tame in the White House, Herb Klein, the Administration's director of communications, and three other Nixon aides happen to have won their editorial wings there.

With its armed guards and double steel gates, the Union building itself has a military bearing. On the fourth floor is Copley's director of editorial and news policy, former Lt. Gen. Victor Krulak, who quit the Marines in 1968 after heading the corps in Vietnam and then being passed over for commandant. His present post is his first newspaper job. Krulak likes Union staffers to call him Brute, the tag he won for being the shortest (officially—and generously—about 5 feet 3) yet pepperiest cadet at Annapolis. A Union newsman says privately, "Krulak was too hawkish for the Marine Corps but he was just right for Copley."

Union executives call their paper "positive," and Krulak says it is "for a solid military economy" and "oriented to the rightness of our basic institutions." The Union is heavy on Rotary meetings, local history, homecoming Navy ships, Pearl Harbor Day, and the La Jolla-based Military Order of the World Wars (known to some disgusted staffers as "MOW-WOW"). Photos of the annual massing-of-flags ceremony at Balboa Park are obligatory, but there are equally strict rules of omission. The Union paints pants on nude comic-strip figures, refuses ads for X-rated movies, and edits sex out of "Dear Abby". It ignores the "underground" Roman Catholic Masses that young people have been conducting near the Union offices, though the Bishop of San Diego has approved them.

There are more serious omissions. San Diego is 5 per cent black and 25 per cent Mexican-American, but a black subscriber complains, "You feel from reading the Union that San Diego is just a nice, quiet white community." The paper shuns Black Panther activity at home but devotes lengthy coverage to Panther violence in Chicago and Los Angeles. A former Union reporter says: "Any intelligent person who wants to know what's going on, even in San Diego, has to take The Los Angeles Times."

According to Union editorials, there are few justified defense-budget cuts and welfare is a potential social pollutant. The paper backed Fred C. Schwarz's shrill anti-Red crusade; its columnists run a minuscule range of opinion from Ralph de Toledano to Max Rafferty; and even its letters to the editor are conservative. "The Union," a staffer sums up, "has the kind of attitude the United States Navy had in 1895."

Newsweek—Wally McNamee

Klein: More self-examination

The same martial spirit is abundantly evident when company executives meet each year at El Casa del Zorro (The House of the Fox), Copley's palatial, flag-festooned home in Borrego Springs, Calif. Super-Jim greets them wearing a sweatshirt emblazoned with a huge C, and they sometimes confer while exercising in his gymnasium. From this gung-ho conclave emerge policies for his string of papers in Illinois and California, with a combined circulation of 700,000, all but one of them enjoying a local monopoly on printed news.

This mini-empire was started in Illinois by Super-Jim's father, tough spit-and-polish Col. Ira C. Copley, who acquired his first newspaper, The Aurora Beacon, in 1905. By 1928, the colonel had organized five papers into one company; then he moved out West to expand his business and wage the good fight against what he considered the socialistic Hoover Dam. He lost on the dam but kept on acquiring papers. When he died in 1947, at the age of 83, Jim took over the holdings and the expansionist spirit. He developed the international Copley News Service, with 340 clients (29 by wire), bought the 115-year-old Sacramento Union, and began dabbling in radio and television stations, movies, management consulting, computers and oceanography.

Cues: The Copley Press, Inc. now includes fourteen dailies and eight weeklies, ranging from the little (3,000 bimonthly) Borrego Sun to the Union (150,000 daily, 260,000 Sunday). Though the over-all operation seems successful, the Union has suffered growth problems common to many newspapers these days. The San Diego area has had a population increase of 278,900 in the past five years, but the Union's circulation has risen only nine per cent, some 30,000. (Television and a local sale of 16,000 by The Los Angeles Times are held to blame.) Copley officials say their papers are all editorially independent, but apart from the maverick Democratic stance of the State Register in Springfield, Ill., and occasional vagaries elsewhere, all seem to take their cues from the Union.

At 53, Jim Copley exerts little direct control over his papers (putting his signature to the Union's front-page editorial backing Goldwater in 1964 was an exception). In fact, when he once made one of his infrequent tours of the Union office, he examined an AP Wire Photo machine and asked in all innocence, "Is this mine?" Nevertheless, he pours money, talent and the company's best resources into the Union, which is known as the company's "flagship." The paper has an excellent training program for writers and reporters, modern typography and layout, a pioneer reputation in news- [illegible] and 140 reporters who

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